



Food for Thought



ROTARIAN ACTION GROUP FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF HUNGER & MALNUTRITION

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An evening with the Rotary Paapa beneficiaries

*by Sudha Umashanker
Area Coordinator, India*

It's a weekday evening and there has been a steady drizzle all day. Yet all the mothers of children enrolled in the Rotary Paapa project have braved the trip to Iniya Udaiyam volunteer Sashi's house to collect their twice-weekly supply of milk, eggs, dates, porridge mix and bananas. Some of the mothers have brought the children along. We all huddle inside Sashi's living room for a face-to-face. I tell them about the support that has come from RAG for the Alleviation of Hunger and Malnutrition and Hunger Plus from half-way across the globe and they are all smiles. Iniya Udaiyam Founder Trustee Sujatha Shekar who accompanied me listens in.

I asked the mothers what kind of a difference the supplemental nutrition has



made to the health status of the children and the answers come thick and fast. "My child is very active these days," says Kannamma " She is on the go all the time," adds Jayanthi. "Its made a lot of difference to the child's growth, both in height and weight," says Rama Devi. Sashi's own son, Venkatraman the oldest of the beneficiaries and a heart patient at that, has registered significant improvement according to his mother "Earlier he used to fall ill frequently. With the supplemental nutrition not only has his immunity gone up, he also recovers faster if he does fall ill."

About 50 children remain enrolled in the project as some of the others have

relocated as their parents have migrated elsewhere in search of work. But for the occasional cold and cough on account of the change in weather the mothers unanimously agree that the children are doing pretty well. They have also figured out that if cooked well and served with milk and sugar (as opposed to just water and sugar) the children do like the porridge. The proof of the pudding is in the eating . What better proof of RAG for the Alleviation of Hunger and Malnutrition and Hunger Plus' money being well spent than healthy, well-nourished children.

Sudha Umashaanker is District Chairman New Horizons RI District 3230 and Area Coordinator for India for our Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger & Malnutrition.

California Rotary & Interact clubs team up to tackle hunger and malnutrition in their own community

by Carole Donahue

Saturday October 10th found a dedicated group of members of the Calabasas (CA) Rotary Club standing outside the Calabasas Albertson's Market, ambitiously striving for their best ever food drive to start off the Fall season. With many thanks to Albertson's of Calabasas management and their kind and generous shoppers approximately 112 cubic feet of food was collected, consisting of nearly 1,000 items!



While we fell a bit short of our ambitious goal for this Food Drive, to double the amount of food donations for the year, Calabasas Rotarians joined forces with Interact Club members from Calabasas High School to deliver a huge haul of food to the West Valley Food Pantry. Enthusiastic volunteers from the Calabasas Rotary Club and the Interact Club at Calabasas High School, led by their President, Beccah Svoboda (pictured below with Calabasas Rotary Club president, Bette Hall), showed up



throughout the day beginning at 8:30am until 3:00pm. It was a day filled with fellowship, service, and the knowledge that many, many families will benefit who seek emergency food from the West Valley Food Pantry. All in all, the Food Drive was a great success!

Calabasas Rotarians have been active supporters of the West Valley Food Pantry for several years, through ongoing

donations from Rotarians at our weekly meetings of non-perishable foods.

The West Valley Food Pantry is a coalition of eleven congregations located in the West San Fernando Valley providing emergency food to the needy and homeless in the area. It was founded in 1985 to make sure that the hungry, working poor and the homeless in the West Valley have access to emergency food. It operates 5 days a week (Monday to Thursday from 10 am to 3:00) and 10 to Noon on Friday. It is located in the kitchen of the Prince of Peace Episcopal Church at 5700 Rudnick Avenue in Woodland Hills (91367). It also assists the Family Rescue Center (Rescate) in Canoga Park at 22103 Vanowen Street.

The West Valley Food Pantry has seen a huge increase in the need to provide food to folks in need over the last year and

provides over 220,000 meals to over 24,000 people, and every effort is made to assure that these meals provide a balanced and nutritious diet. 38% of its clients are the working poor or seniors on very limited income, 33% qualify for food stamps or are on Welfare, 19% have recent unemployment, and 10% are homeless or other.

All regular clients must register and show evidence of residence between Reseda Boulevard on the east and Rinaldi Street at the north, west to the Ventura County line and south to Fernwood in Topanga Canyon.

Clients receive a monthly food package and each package exceed 10 pounds; consisting of canned goods and non-perishables, balanced by fresh foods and are delivered at a cost of about 34¢ a pound. Registered clients receive a complete food package once a month. It also operates a "SENIORS" federally funded program from 9 to 11 am on the first Wednesday of the month.

More information about the West Valley Food Pantry may be found on its website at: popwh.org/newpop/min_food_pantry.html or by phone (818) 346-5554 or FAX: (818)346-3349.

- **Encourage friends and family** to share the extra produce from their gardens via AmpleHarvest.org.
- **Share <http://www.ampleharvest.org/downloads/pantry.pdf>** with the food pantries (which are often churches) in your community.
- **Ask your local garden shop/nursery** to help their customers learn about [AmpleHarvest.org](http://www.ampleharvest.org) by posting the flyer you can download at <http://www.ampleharvest.org/InformingTheGardener.php>.
- **Share with local media the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign.** Press/media information is available at <http://www.ampleharvest.org/press.php>.
- **Join the growing group of AmpleHarvest.org volunteers nationwide who help spread the word about AmpleHarvest.org** (email info@AmpleHarvest.org for additional information).
- **Most importantly, if you are a backyard, patio or kitchen gardener, please be generous with your excess harvest.** You are one of 43 million gardeners in America who, garden by garden, can diminish hunger in your community.



Rotary and Breedlove: A Partnership Whose Time Has Come?



When you're in the business of feeding the hungry, the ultimate goal is to work oneself out of a job. However, the reality that we all know is that we have very far to go, and no time to waste. Rotarians believe that in order to break of the cycle of poverty you "must first make minds and bodies strong...by providing short term food supplies to communities in need while working to develop the infrastructure needed to enable communities to become self-reliant..." How do you accomplish such a monumental task? By utilizing strategic partnerships. Breedlove Foods desires to be a significant part of that picture.

Breedlove Foods is a non-profit processing and packaging facility whose mission is to produce affordable, innovative, premium, nutritious food aid products to be distributed to the hungry of the world via strategic partnerships with other humanitarian, missions, or religious organizations. In fact, we like to say that our mission is to help you fulfill yours. Our vision is to break the deadly cycle of poverty and hunger by



leveraging our leadership and experience in international humanitarian relief.

How does Breedlove's mission and vision fit within the scope of Rotary Action Groups? We are uniquely positioned to provide food relief as a stopgap measure in the effort to break the deadly cycle of poverty. It's been said that you can't feed the soul if the body is hungry. In much the same way, you can't successfully create long term results in development

projects if you don't first care for the immediate needs in the process.

We all know the devastating facts and figures of hunger and malnutrition, and we all have at least a cursory knowledge of why it exists. It's no secret that Rotarians have had great success in other projects over the years, and we want to work with you as your local clubs and districts explore ways to get involved in the **ROTARIAN ACTION GROUP FOR THE ALLEVIATION OF HUNGER & MALNUTRITION.**

We haven't worked ourselves out of a job yet, and until the epidemic of hunger and malnutrition has been obliterated, there is still much to be done. What can Rotary and Breedlove do together in the coming years? Visit our website at www.breedlove.org or contact us at 806-741-0404 or info@breedlove.org for more information or to visit with us about the possibilities that exist to partner together in the fight against hunger.

Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger & Malnutrition



Hunger issues are not new to Rotarians. We have been feeding the hungry for a very long time because we know that in order to break the cycle of poverty, we must first make minds & bodies strong.

The **Rotarian Action Group for the Alleviation of Hunger and Malnutrition** provides the opportunity for Rotarians from every corner of the world to form a network of individuals working to alleviate hunger and malnutrition. We share our experiences, projects, successes, challenges and needs with one another to create a pool of information and partnerships in service. Our Rotarian Action Group works toward the alleviation of hunger by meeting the

short-term needs of immediate food supply where appropriate while working to develop the necessary infrastructure that will enable communities to become self-reliant in either developing or being able to purchase their necessary nutritional needs. By partnering and coordinating our efforts with other groups and organizations working in the field, we are able to stretch our dollars and avoid duplication. Instead of random, separate hunger and malnutrition projects, the Action Group can connect us and strengthen our efforts to make our Rotary projects and programs effective. Visit us at www.alleviatehunger.org for more project and membership information.